November, 1986
Volume 6, No. 10
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# M.A.C.E. JOURNAL

*"Devoted Exclusively To The Atari Computer User"*

## THE M.A.C.E. OFFICERS

## "HARVEST" OF ARTICLES

**Published by the Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts**

# FROM THE PRESIDENT

Tom Sturza

The elections are over and the newly elected officers have held their first executive board meeting. You will not see the word "acting" in front of certain officer's titles any more. So, let's get on with business ...

An often asked question is "just what is the business of M.A.C.E."? Well, let's start with the purpose of our user group as defined in the M.A.C.E. Constitution:

"It shall be the purpose of the Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts to promote an interexchange of ideas and information concerning ATARI personal computers."

This interexchange of ideas and information occurs in many different ways: At the monthly General meeting, in the M.A.C.E. Journal, at Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings, through diskettes in our Public Domain disk library, at officer meetings, on the BBSystem's we sponsor and in the exchange of newsletters with over 70 other ATARI User Groups worldwide.

Now that we have stated what we are trying to do, let's briefly discuss how we pay for these services. As you will read later on in this issue, M.A.C.E. took in and paid out certain monies during the 1985-86 budget year. Your officers are in the process of creating a budget for 1986-87. Monies in are of three types: Membership dues, Public Domain diskette sales, and ads in the M.A.C.E. Journal. Monies out include: Room rental fees, printing costs, blank diskette purchases, postage, repairing M.A.C.E. owned equipment, phone bills for our BBSystems and miscellaneous costs of such things as mailing labels, envelopes, etc.

Sounds like the M.A.C.E. User Group is a business, doesn't it? A business that promotes the exchange of ideas between owners of ATARI computer products. A business that has income and costs associated with the functions of doing business.

Well, as your President, I plan to keep a very close watch over the business end of our User Group. We will live within our budget! We will keep all members informed of what is going on! We will only spend money when necessary to provide services to our members! We will listen to what our members say and attempt to provide what is requested!

However, we are only human and may sometimes error in what we say or do. Please forgive us when this happens, but always feel free to point out what it was that caused your concern or need to comment. Your officers were elected to serve the members of M.A.C.E. and to run the business that provides this service.

Special notice: It became necessary to take down the M.A.C.E. East BBSystem at (313) 585-2165. Please spread the word that this BBS is no longer in service at the above telephone number. We are in the process of interviewing potential SYSOP's for a new M.A.C.E. 8-bit BBS. (Please see article elsewhere in this Journal.)

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November, 1986
Volume 6, No. 10

# MACE JOURNAL

THE COMPUTER MAGAZINE FOR THE PROGRESSIVE ATARI USER

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Bring disk to the monthly general meeting or send it to: MACE, PO Box 2785, Southfield MI 48037 Attn: Disk Librarian.

JOURNAL SUBMISSIONS
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# COORDINATOR'S COMMENTS

by Christopher Samuels

As M.A.C.E. meeting coordinator, it's my job to handle the main meeting organization and anything that might benefit the club in general. As time permits, I will have a column in the Journal to inform MACE members of future meeting agendas, upcoming MACE events, questions & answers, suggestions, and anything that might interest the general membership.

Agenda: So far, these are the main topics (tentatively) scheduled for the next few months.

November meeting: A question & answer session is scheduled to answer questions about hardware, software, SIG (Special Interest Groups) info, or any thing dealing with club organization are some of the general topics to be covered. I want to get some of the club's advanced/expert (A/E) users together to answer questions from the general membership. I would appreciate it if you are an advance/expert user to volunteer your services to answer some of the questions at the meeting. However, if you are an A/E user and want to help but don't want to get in-front of the audience to answer questions, I will be accepting written questions (through suggestion box) to be answered. If you are interested, I need a response as soon as possible. Also scheduled are comparison demos that compare the word processing power of the Atari 16 bit computer (520 ST) versus the Atari 8 bit line (130 XE, 800XL, and earlier). The demos will be designed to show the some of the more powerful features of the programs (as opposed to a "which is better") type demo. The ST demos will be supplied by the MACE ST SIG group.

December meeting: This meeting will be for the Christmas computer shopper. We will (try) to have the latest info on what's new for '87.

January meeting: This one will be for a computer Swap-Night.

T-Shirts: I have received some suggestions to see if members would be interested in purchasing MACE T-shirts. A couple of years back the club had some T-shirts made up by one of our members at that time. However, we are unable to contact the person who did the shirts at that time. So if the club is interested in getting MACE T-shirts, we need someone in the membership who knows a T-shirt establishment from whom the club will receive a favorable discount. We also need someone who would be willing to handle this project. There probably be a minimum order(about 50-100) in order to get a discount. Other suggestions on the T-shirts were that SIG group logo's be be printed on the shirts (ie ST SIG,TARICON SIG, etc.) and/or members names on the back. See me for further details.

So, if you have any suggestions or comments for future meetings you can either drop them off at the suggestion box, leave a message on MACE West (addressed to Chris Meeting Coordinator (C.M.C)), or hand them to me in person. Also anyone who has wanted to help-out (volunteer) during the main meeting, please complete one of the forms located at the suggestion box, so I know exactly what you would like to do ie do game demos, help during setup,etc..

The more you contribute, the better this club will be.

# Flying the ST

by Allen P. Bargen

Picking a topic for the monthly column is getting more difficult all the time. Not that there isn't a whole lot going on, to the contrary, there is too much going on in our ST world! Recently, I stopped by the local Atari outlets, and asked who was buying the new machines. Surprisingly, most dealers said that the majority of their sales were going to first time computer users. People like young professionals just starting their practice who were in need of a good system that could keep track of their patients or clients, and do good quality word processing as well. I was also surprised to learn that color systems outsell their monochrome brothers. Seems a demonstration of color outstrips the better resolution of the monochrome monitor and the small price differential makes it worth the extra money.

I went out and bought a second monochrome monitor for the very purpose of word processing, and am pleased with it. My 1040ST ranks right up there with the best of them when it comes to clarity. Monochrome systems are not selling as well as Atari thought they would for the reasons already stated, so you might be well advised to keep your eyes open for a deal.

One of the reasons that I bought a 1040ST was to do CAD. Often I will create a drawing using Degas from Batteries Included. In the real world I work for a major electrical company and spend hours every day with custom design for our customers. The closest VAX to my office is in Hamilton, Ontario and our T.I. mainframe won't let me do graphic work, so I get to do it at home. Lucky for me! Yes, I said Degas for CAD. If that surprises you, it shouldn't. Degas is after all a drawing tool. With the monochrome monitor it is possible to get very fine resolution with lines, and incredible detail. Setting up the printer is a snap, and the drawing is quickly done with little fuss. CAD programs abound for the ST such as CAD-3D or The Graphic Artist, but these programs are for those jobs where technical sophistication is required. For the most part simple line drawings are easier on Degas because there is little to remember. Creating a full screen of electrical symbols is a snap, since I customized one of the character sets for this purpose. Using the monochrome monitor and a standard alt/help screen dump produces excellent results. Many of these drawings are Fax'ed all over the world to various offices, so clarity is critical. (FAX, is a telephone device to send photocopies between two FAX Machines anywhere.)

Software is coming in fast for the ST. One of the nicest demos that we recently saw was a combination speech and video digitizer from Germany. The clarity and color of the pictures is stunning, and the speech is high quality. This is the type of product that is becoming commonplace for the ST. Word processor packages, and data base programs are filling the shelves. A review of all current word processor packages will be written soon with comparative features. My pick of an outstanding program this month, goes to THUNDER!, a spelling checker from Batteries Included. It is functionally one of the most important additions to any serious word processor since it allows you to auto check spelling as you type, or optionally do it after you are finished entering your text. It is a shadow program that will go unnoticed until you need it. The manual is clear, concise and easy to read. Highly recommended.

Good entertainment is also available for the ST. Adventures are taking a whole new meaning as the superlative graphics of the St are used, along with the greatly increased RAM, thus allowing larger programs to sit resident in the computer. Simulations are making strong headway for the same reasons. The Karate Kid II is one such program that will amaze you. Cards from Michtron is an interesting diversion with excellent playability. The cards are well marked, and shuffling is fast, and impressive.

# SUPPORT is a TWO-WAY STREET

By Doug Miller

For the past few months I've been coming to the MACE meetings and I've been watching as we let our club deteriorate. It seems like every month everyone just sits back and listens as the officers plead for their support. Most obviously think that the other guy will pick up the slack, and that everything will be ok. DON'T COUNT ON IT!!! Apathy is additive. It's a lot easier to sit back and do nothing, than to put forth some effort to make MACE a better group. But if we all continue to ignore the situation, we may soon have to find something else to do on the third Tuesday of the month.

Personally, I don't want to see that happen, so I've come up with a few suggestions that I think can help to make for a better users group. After reading this article, see if maybe you can find a few minutes to support MACE, so that it can continue to support you.

REVIEWS AND YOU

Anyone that uses a computer can write a review. Everyone has both hardware and software that they use. A review is basically just an opinion of the product. What is it? Who makes it? How much does it cost? What are it's good points/bad points? Are there other similar programs that are better/worse?

That's all there is to it. And it only takes a few minutes with a word processor to type one up. So there is really no reason why everyone couldn't write a review for printing in the Journal. Why not try it, you may find you like having your name in print.

USER ADVICE NUMBERS

I have to admit that this is not my own idea. I've been reading some of the other user group journals that we receive in the exchange program, and I found this particular idea in the journal from the Washington DC Area ACE.

They have what they refer to as the W.A.A.C.E. Hotlist. This is a list of the various members and their phone numbers, that are willing to help others with problems that they have in that members particular area of expertise.

Some of the categories that are covered are: DISK DRIVES, PRINTERS, LANGUAGES, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, WORD PROCESSING, SPREAD SHEETS, DATABASES, ADD ONS, DOS's, CHIPS, and MUSIC.

Each member lists an area that they are willing to help with (some are listed for more than one), then anyone that needs help can call for advice. I think this is an excellent idea, and I personally would like to suggest to the officers that we consider initiating this policy.

SOFTWARE DONATIONS

If you are like me, and I'm sure most of you are, then you probably have some software laying around the house that you no longer use. Why not donate it to the group? It can then be used for demonstration, it can be used by the club for review, and it could be sold by the club during our swap meet to add to the club's account, which brings me to the next suggestion.

SWAP MEETS

Every year MACE holds a swap night for it's users, so that they can buy, sell, or trade both hardware and software that they no longer need. If you missed the swap meet in June, then you missed out on some good buys. The only problem with an annual swap night is that those of us that want to buy or sell things now have to wait till next year to do it at the group meeting. I think we should have an area set aside for resale on a monthly basis, to make it easier for MACE members to acquire the items they are looking for.

FINITO

There are many other things that can be done to return MACE to the status it once held. We were once the largest and best group in the country, and we can be again. All it takes is a little user participation. And please take note of the'u' in user. Don't wait for the other guy to do his part. Be a leader and show the other users that you know support is a two-way street.

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1025 PRINTER
1027 PRINTER
1020 PEK PACKS
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1025 RIBBON

PAPER
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PRINT SHOP

520 STATION
HABA MODEM
PACKARD BELL MODEM
HIPPOVISION
PRINTER STANDS
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ST MODEM CABLE
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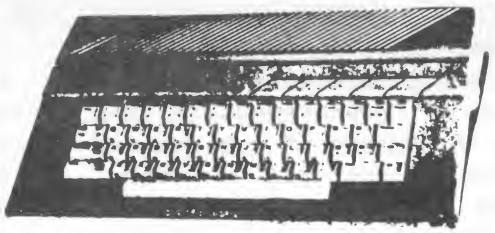

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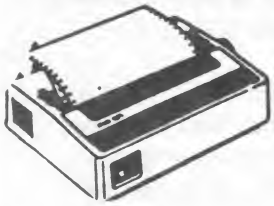

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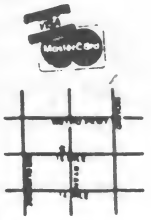

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# THUNDER! FOR THE ST

by Paul R. Wheeler

BATTERIES INCLUDED, Inc.
30 Mural Street
Richmond Hill, Ont., Canada
L4B 1B5
(416) 881-9816
$39.95

At long last, I finally got my hands on Batteries Included (BI) THUNDER! the Writers Assistant program. To take a line from the manual, "to call THUNDER! a spelling checker is akin to calling a Ferrari just another car". I agree with this analogy, for with the Atari ST computer and its GEM interface, we have truly entered the fastlane. Speed for a typical ASCII text file on a;

ramdisk - 80 words/sec
hard disk - 60 words/sec
floppydisk - 40 words/sec

These times may vary according to the size of the dictionaries and the file itself, but you'll see for yourself just how fast THUNDER! is!

THUNDER! is 3 powerful writer's tools in one program. 1) Spelling Checker, 2) Speed-Typing Word Expander & Corrector, and 3) a detailed analysis of your document, including word, paragraph, syllable counts and a readability score. The spelling checker is provided in two different forms, one where it resides in RAM and checks for errors as you type, much like the expensive electric typewriters, while the other is a stand alone program that checks a finished document. The latter might be preferred by a fast typist who doesn't wish to be alerted by THUNDER! when typing and would rather check and edit the document upon completion.

The program uses 3 dictionaries, the Main, Supplementary, and the Learned. The Main is loaded by the program. An option is provided for the others to load by the program or can be loaded later. The Main Dictionary contains approximately 50,000 words, to which another 2,000 can be added. It is best to choose the words carefully as once entered, they cannot be removed. The Supplementary dictionary would be a better choice for casual words, as these can be erased or altered. While the Suplimental Dictionary can only hold 200 words, you can have several supplementary dictionaries for use with different filenames. A typical Supplementary Dictionary could be created for words like MACE, Atari, RGB, Comdex, Taricon. The Learned Dictionary holds 100 pairs and can also be saved under different filenames to provide more than one. Some examples of learned words would be:

fyi becomes - for your information
btw - by the way
rec - receive
Dec - december
etc...

If you typed 'Dec' it would be replaced by December, 'DEC' by DECEMBER. Also as pointed out, if you were in the habit of misspelling a word such as 'recieve', you could LEARN your dictionary to replace the misspelled word with the correct word each time it was typed.

THUNDER! is loaded with features and to cover them all in this review would take a lot of Journal space. The 54-page manual provided covers all features in a very concise and understanding manner. In just a few moments you'll have THUNDER! up and running.

THUNDER!, like other BI products, comes unprotected and you are encourage to make back-up copies but not to use them in an authorized manner. If you want more quality programs like this, please honor their request.

On a scale of 1 - 10 THUNDER! is a big fat 9.5, because I know Batteries Included is constantly improving their programs and I assume THUNDER! will be no exception.

## From the Corresponding Secretary

Jim Kennedy

For those of you that haven't heard yet, Future Systems, Inc. has bought out Indus Systems. Warranties under Indus Systems are now invalid! Future Systems is selling one-year extended warranties for $29.95 before October 31, 1986. We have received ten brochures from Future Systems, Inc. outlining such services and products (also see the NEW PRODUCTS column in this issue). If you haven't received one in the mail from them, you may pick one up at the October 21st meeting or call/write to them at;

FUTURE SYSTEMS, INC.
9811 Owensmouth Avenue, Suite 9
Chatsworth, CA 91311
(818) 407-1647

For those of you who have bought the MACE library disk #BE, the pictures on this disk can be seen on an Atari 800! Supposedly you needed an Atari 130XE or equivalent. But by booting your Koala Pad/software you can load each picture in and view it. Then you can save each back to (another) disk and they will be in the condensed format, programs like "Magic Lantern" accept. And all of this can be done on an Atari 800 with 48K!

Tired of trying to fit all of those program names on that small little disk label? Avery makes labels that measure 4 3/4" x 1 1/4". You can also get little colored squares or circles to put on the labels to color-code them!

ATTENTION: ST Owners! There is a new publication out for Small Businesses using the Atari ST, called "ST Business" (5140 Appletree Dr., Roanoke, VA 24019, (703)342-9599).

My Mistake! I said we received newsletters from as far away as Australia & the West Indies. That should have been Australia & South Africa!

## FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT

Chuck Norris

Well here I am, MACE V.P., so far so good, I guess. You will notice that there are few advertisers in the journal this month. We are truely sorry that we were not able to publish some ads due to lack of payment by their advertisers. If an advertiser has been late by 3 months on their bill then, MACE has no choice but to stop the advertisement until the account is current.

What is needed are dedicated people to serve on an advertising and art commitee. They will provide the personal contact as MACE representatives to local retailers, soliciting products for advertisement in a major user group Journal. This will require a minimun amount of personal time with all follow-up and billing being done by myself.

If you are interested in a way to help out your user group, then contact me either at the MACE general meeting or call the NEWEST of the MACE BBS's The 'MACE SUPERBOARD ST' (313-543-8349) and leave a message for me, or call any of the MACE BBS's.

This is your user group and the officers need and appreciate your help as much as possible.

Chuck Norris
Mace V.P.
Advertising Mgr.
Sysop:
MACE SUPERBOARD ST

---

Instead of switching your XL/XE off and back on again to boot a disk, use the following trick: type POKE 580,1 and press <RETURN>, <RESET>.

# NEW PRODUCTS

Compiled by Jim Kennedy

The following items were received at our P.O. Box and are included here as a service to our members. Feel free to write these companies for more information and tell them you saw it in the MACE Journal! Special thanks to Antic Magazine for helping us create this column.

<<<<<<<<< For the 8-bits >>>>>>>>>

"Chipmunk"
Microdaft
19 Harbor Drive
Lake Hopatcong, NJ 07849
$34.95 (Disk) Works on; 800/XL/XE.

"Chipmunk" is a software back-up program solely on disk! It will copy only those programs it has parameters for, which numbered 584 as of 8-14-86. Including; B/Graph, Chess 7.0, Data & Letter Perfect, The Print Shop and Silent Service.

---

"RAM Charger & CP/M 2.2"
Future Systems, Inc.
9811 Owensmouth Avenue, Suite 9
Chatsworth, CA 91311
(818) 407-1647
$129 ($99 w/out CP/M disk)

For you Indus GT disk drive owners, the Future has a module for you! By installing a module in your Indus GT, your drive will be able to read thousands of CP/M disks! With included software, your Atari will act as a terminal for the Z80 computer inside your Indus GT. The module has an additional 64K of RAM for the CP/M operating system.

<<<<<<<<<< For the ST's >>>>>>>>>>

"HOME AID ST"
SRM Enterprises
P.O. Box 40
USAFA, CO 80840
(303) 472-6624
$39.95

This program takes full advantage of the GEM interface. Allowing you to analyze and keep your Budget, Address Book, Appointment Book, and Savings & Loan. Requires TOS in ROM for main programs. Uses medium or high resolution.

---

```
5 Z=INT(RND(0)*200)+28:Y=INT((1.06^3)*Z)
:X=INT((1.06^7)*Z):SOUND 0,X,14,10:SOUND
1,Y,14,10 : SOUND 2,Z,14,10:GOTO 5
```

---

## MACE GROUP PURCHASE!

We are able to purchase the one meg MIO board by ICD for $300. This is a multiple-use device for either the 800XL or 130XE computers. It plugs directly into the parallel bus on the 800XL or uses an adapter available for $20 on the 130XE. The MIO board can be used as RAMDISK, a printer port, printer buffer, modem prot and hard disk interface. The configuration software is built in.

Mail your certified check or money order to MACE, PO Box 2785, Southfield, MI 48037. You must include your name, address and membership number.

## The Newest of the Mace BBS'S

It has been a long time since the Atari ST's has appeared on the shelves. MACE has always tried to keep up with the changing world of Atari. So, now comes the addition of the newest MACE BBS....

THE MACE SUPERBOARD ST!!

The system is run on the following..

The 1040ST
Supra 20 Meg hard drive
Habba 1200 baud modem
Gemini 10x printer
Phone line provided by MACE

MACE would like to express their thanks to Commnet Systems who supplied the software FoReM ST.

The FoRem ST features over 24 Meg on line, multi-message bases, multi-download sections for both the ST and the 8 bit computers, 2000 membership limit, data bases, help menus, E-mail, and much more. I have yet to explore all the options that are open to the Sysop of this BBS. I will be adding features from time to time based on your inputs and requests. So give it a try and leave a message on what you think!

One of the special features of this BBS is the addition of the MACE message base. Current MACE members accessing this base will find details of the officers meeting, what's new and exciting in the world of Atari, and items that may be offered at special MACE GROUP purchase price.

There will be advertisers on the BBS with their own data base which we will provide for a nominal price. Software shops or distributors should contact me through our Post Office Box address for availability and rates.

Currently this BBS is running on a member's hardware! Mace will GREATLY appreciate any assistance in obtaining hardware on loan to keep this BBS on line and running. All companies donating equipment will be acknowledged in the opening sign-on message.

Enjoy the system!!!!

Chuck Norris
Vice President
MACE

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## MACE EAST BBS

The MACE EAST BBS is currently down while we conduct a search for a new sysop. We are looking for a man or woman with a good working knowledge of telecommunications and basic. This individual must live north of 8 Mile Road and have enough free time to keep the board current. MACE will supply all the equipment, the AMIS BBS program and any needed technical support. MACE also pays the basic phone line charge. If you are interested in applying for this volunteer position, please download the sysop application from MACE WEST (581-5560), fill it out and either mail it to the MACE PO Box or turn it in to Sharie Middlebrook (in person or via modem).

**********

## LABEL WATCH

Take a quick look at the mailing label on this Journal. The top line contains two important numbers, the first is your MACE membership number and the other is your expiration date. Keep a sharp look-out on that date, if it has been highlighted in yellow...you have only one more issue coming. But if it has been highlighted in RED then it will be your last issue unless you renew. If your date has been highlighted renew now so you won't miss an issue.

# NEWSLETTER NUGGETS

by Gordon Totty

Thanks to our Corresponding Secretary, Jim Kennedy, I got a real opportunity to enjoy myself this month, while at the same time maybe helping M.A.C.E. and you. (Did you spot the redundancy in that? You are M.A.C.E., and don't you ever forget it.) The fun I had was reading newsletters from other Atari groups. The deal Jim made with me was that I was supposed to look for stuff in them that would be worth passing on to you. I thought that a good way to start this project would be to let you know something about these other newsletters in terms of appearance, content, group, location, etc. So here are some newsletter notes for you.

Status Newsletter, Virginia Beach, VA. 12 half size pages.
Jay Pierstorff reports that the Commodore 1350 controller (mouse) will work with the Atari, but it is a "joystick emulator" not a true mouse. Also the connector is too short to reach the Atari's pins. This problem can be solved by using a joystick extension cable between the mouse and the joystick port. Bob Kelly noted that the Atari Explorer is back in business with a new editor, David Ahl, formerly of Creative Computing. So, where's my copy?

Jacksonville Atari Computer Enthusiasts (J.A.C.E.), Jacksonville, FL. 14 half size pages.
JACE may be new, not yet having achieved official status as a non-profit organization. The JACE membership card gets its owner discounts at local merchants. Ruby-Kathryn Woodard wrote an amusing review of M.U.L.E. She describes herself as a "known M.U.L.E. addict."

Dragon Lore The Official Sun Metro Atari User Group Newsletter (SMAUG), El Paso, TX. 38 half size pages.
This group recently enjoyed a demonstration of The New Aladdin. SMAUG will not allow reprints without permission, and I'm too lazy to bother to ask. I can, however, safely report that their acronym has nothing to do with El Paso air quality, but rather is the name of the dragon in The Hobbit. Also, I am not "reprinting" in telling you that their editor is using the flimsy excuse of leaving the area to resign his post. More significantly, he reports that if he returns he will not reassume his duties. He very politely points out that it is time for some of the newer club members to make a contribution. Sound familiar?

Between Bytes The Journal of the Jersey Atari Computer Society (JACS), Clementon, NJ. 11 pages.
Well, computer fans, JACS has something we don't! They have a 1040ST!! Big deal, you say? The big deal is they loan it out to members!!! Two qualifications are necessary to borrow it. First, you have to be more than just a member, you have to be known to the officers by reason of being an active member. Second, you have to part with a credit card for a deposit to be recorded. JACS has managed this with only 177 members. Wow!!
In the Bits & Pieces column, Irv Feinberg reported the following:
"BYTE MAGAZINE-the user bible-ran that front page story on the Atari 1040ST, and that article was favorable. Jerry Pournelle in Infoworld has mentioned Atari several times and I quote, 'From here on, you had better think of Atari as a major player in the computer game.'
"HERE is a kicker. Steve Ciarcia announced that he was selling his IBM PC and buying an Atari ST. Steve has for years run a column in Byte. When people like that start going for a computer, you better ask yourself, 'what's going on here?'"
Mr. Feinberg also lists scads of products that Atari plans to introduce in the near future (new graphics chip, new sound chip, new this, new that, etc.). I don't know about you, but ever since the 1450XLD I have been very suspicious of all such "sales talk". Must admit,

however, that they may really be planning to bring out the ST line. Soon, too. Maybe.

MILATARI Newsletter, Milwaukee Area Atari User's Group, West Allis, WI. 15 pages.
Mostly Antic reprints, but included a delightful page of game tips which they reprinted from "Computer Squad". Did you know that in PITFALL if you start the game by pressing OPTION you will have unlimited lives? Did you know that in ULTIMA III to get into the Exodus Castle you should type the word "EVOCARE"? Did you know that in STRIP POKER you should change (...CENSORED...CENSORED...) and the first girl will appear nude?

PACENET, Philadelphia Atari Users' Group, associated with Philadelphia Area Computer Society (PACS). Philadelphia, PA. 5 pages.
With a 5-page newsletter, how can they afford to maintain such a long title?
Albert J. McCullough, Jr. reports that the INDUS telephone number is out of service, leaving him wondering if INDUS is out of business. Also, not appearing to be one to mince words, Al reports something that I have been hiding from you. After my glowing review of Home Computer Magazine some months ago, HCM went out of business. I paid for this; they had my check for a one year subscription. After some months and a couple of letters, they resumed publication of a new magazine, HC Journal, which they are spending my money on to send me quarterly. I will not describe the new publication for fear of killing it, too, but will tell you that I feel cheated. I hope my review did not lead any of you into the same mess.

P.A.C.E., Ports Atari Computer Enthusiasts, Superior, WI. 5 pages.
Not much here, but this was the first month of a new format for their newsletter. Three new members were welcomed by printing their names and cities in the newsletter. Maybe we should try that, too.

TASC Times, Tri-Cities Atari Support Club, Petersburg, VA. 7 pages.
TASC-ers were lucky to have a representative from Electronic Arts at a recent meeting to demonstrate their popular titles. In connection with this a local computer store ran specials on EA software and donated door prizes. Maybe we should try that, too, if we get a Program Coordinator.

KEEPING PACE, Pittsburgh Atari Computer Enthusiasts, Pittsburgh, PA. 20 pages.
Atari has tentatively scheduled user groups in California, Washington, Oregon, and New York to sponsor "Atari Faires" and has contacted P.A.C.E. to do likewise. The details seem to be very similar to what was announced at our August meeting in terms of suggested content, financial support, etc. (Portland and San Diego clubs also reported on these "Faires".)

P.A.C.E. is run by fifteen people! There are nine officers, a five person newsletter staff, and a six person program staff. (The numbers do not add to 15 because some people are holding more than one job.) Looks like an outfit with a very active membership. So, what are they up to? Four members went to the Chicago Electronics Show; Brad Stewart of Covax demonstrated the Voice Master; they are petitioning Atari to be allowed to put on the Faire earlier than Atari suggested; held a "nightly" raffle and gave away a Voice Master; club picnic or dinner under consideration; running an ST Sig; published five pages of news they downloaded from Computing Today, "the online magazine on Genie" (what's a Genie?); also, the usual disk library (over 1000 programs) and BBS.....enough, already!

RAAUG Newsletter, Randolph Area Atari User's Group, Universal City, TX. 9 pages.
Paul Fields, RAAUG Secretary, discussed the announced plans of Atari to bring out an Apple II emulator for the ST line. Wow! But as Paul Fields pointed out, if Atari can do this they should also consider bringing out a similar emulator for their own 8-bit computers. I, for one, am holding back on getting an ST because of the existing software that I own, use, and understand, that would be

useless on the ST. With the emulator, I could keep my existing stuff and add new stuff only for the ST. Aren't dreams nice?

Portland Atari Club, Beaverton, OR. 20 pages.
Another solid looking outfit. Published names of 17 new members, bringing their total to 608. Ten person newsletter staff!!! Shame on us for making our editors work so hard. Here's their crew:
DeLoy Graham, Editor
Steve Billings, Art Director
Debbie Billings, Final Layout
Lee Gassaway, Ad Coordinator
Chuck Hall, Columnist (A dirty job, Chuck, but somebody has to do it.)
Peter Hoesly, Mailing Assistant
Clyde List, Cartoons
Clyde Pritchard, Editor Emeritus (I nominate Ann McBain Ezzell for this honor!)
Debbie Pritchard, Production Coordinator
Kevin Roethe, Mailing Coordinator
Sorry to run on so long, but these folks deserve some credit and I wanted you to see the titles to get a sense of their organization. PAC also has an eleven person Board of Directors. Now, if we could get this kind of organized effort going again.....aren't dreams really nice?
The PAC newsletter had the best coverage of the ST of any of the newsletters I saw. For a further insight into this group, and the degree of their ST interest, note the following list of their SIGs:
Business Applications SIG
Pascal/Modula-2 SIG
ST Explorer's SIG
ST Forth SIG
General ST SIG
Modem & Communications SIG
8-Bit Explorer's SIG
Newsletter SIG (What???)
Well, all is not rosy in Portland's paradise. The Assembler SIG will no longer meet; the end of it all has begun! (Or has it? How about those husband and wife teams!)

The I/O Connector, San Diego Atari Computer Enthusiasts, San Diego, CA. 12 pages.
This outfit has an ATR 8000 SIG.
ACENET, a consortium of southern California Atari user groups, sponsored an Atari Fair in mid-August.
ICD sells a Multi I/O Board for $349 that plugs in to the parallel bus port and converts a 130XE to one megabyte! The board includes a parallel printer interface, a serial printer/modem interface, a printer spooler, and a hard disk interface.

SBACE, Santa Barbara Atari Computer Enthusiasts, Santa Barbara, CA. 9 pages.
Some fellow named Tom Sturza (sounds like an alias, doesn't it?) had a review of The Print Shop Companion reprinted here. Wonder who he is.
To kill alphabet keys but leave number keys intact, Fred Olivas recommends a POKE 702,192. Restore alphabet keys with POKE 702,64. Fred also reported that you can disable your keyboard with POKE 16,255. After this you can hit any key except [RESET] and nothing will happen. That would be a good way to keep me from making mistakes.

SBACE Gazette, South Bay Atari Computer Enthusiasts, Los Angeles, CA. 11 pages.
This club also reported activity on the mid-August "Atari Faire". Twenty manufacturers agreed to be there and another ten were listed as "likely to come".
"There is a $20.00 prize for the best article in this Gazette. The winner will be determined by a vote of the membership at the [next] meeting." Wow! What feedback for the poor writers ... the voting, not the money.
Only 57 members attended the latest meeting; 54 at the one before that.
"If your version of AtariWriter Plus has a glitch in the alphabet between 'bloomers' and 'bubbles', just send a postcard to Atari and they will send a new one. No need to return the original. Write to: Atari Customer Relations, 1196 Borregas Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086, Attn: AtariWriter Plus Dictionary." Hmmmmm. Can hardly wait to check mine, but I wonder if somebody is being funny here. A glitch between the bloomers and bubbles? Nuff sed.
More BASIC programs published in this

short newsletter than in most of the others.

Now that I have mashed my fingers to let those of you who have not seen other newsletters know more about what you are (or are not) missing, let me report a better idea from SBACE. They have a fellow, Dick Reaser, who maintains an inventory of all newsletters received, brings them to meetings, loans them out to members, and even gets them bound into "books" for longer term use. Golly.

Well, folks, there you have it: comments on or from fourteen other user group publications. I hate to ramble on for another column or so, but as I did this I did a lot of thinking about and comparing of us to them. What I concluded is noted below.

Dues: At $20, our dues are in line with everyone else's. A few are lower, none higher, many at the same amount as us.

Door prizes: Very common with other groups. We seem to save ours up for one grand giveaway at our birthday. We might do better to give them out over the year. I always feel like it takes too long at the party, anyway.

Journal articles: We are all similar; almost all are begging for input from the group. Let's do better than the others, shall we?

Journal formats: All similar, though length varies.

Downloaded articles: We do not reprint as much downloaded gems from Antic as the others, but I see our approach as better. Subscribe to Antic; expect something newer or different from M.A.C.E.

Disc Libraries: Everyone seems to have one.

Finances: One or two other groups mentioned financial problems, with one group barely able to run from month to month.

Membership: We may not be the biggest, but we are a long way from being the smallest. Active, viable user groups exist with far less members to keep things moving than we seem to have. More important than size, more important than money, more important than a big journal, is ..... what? Yes, as our officers have stated over and over, an active membership willing to help out.

Officers: My opinion is that a group the size of ours might need more officers, if volunteers will step forward. We might do very well to copy our friends in Pittsburgh and Portland.

Demonstrations: Others are doing more than us, but we have been without a Program Director.

*****

I feel a lot better about prospects for M.A.C.E. after this exercise, but realize that we could, we should, be doing a lot better. I think we will.

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# THE THUNDER OF HOOVES AND THE CLASH OF SWORDS!!

also known as

# THE SHATTERED ALLIANCE

reviewed by Richard L. Staff

Strategic Simulations, Inc. brings ancient warfare to the modern day Atari computer user. For only $39.95 and an Atari computer with 48K of memory, BASIC cartridge, and a disk drive, you can mount your imaginary war horse and ride off to do battle most deadly.

*The Shattered Alliance* is a tactical level simulation of several fantasy and ancient battles. It comes packaged in an eye catching game box, a nice touch for us old wargamers used to boxed games. The rule book is well organized, readable, and illustrated. The game also includes two Command Cards, one Combat Data Card, and one Player Introduction Card (provides a quick intro to using this computer game). A human can watch the computer play against itself, or play against the computer, or play against another human.

Seven battles (also called scenarios) are represented on the game disk. Scenarios one through three relate to the Chronicles of Osgorth; Osgorth is a fantasy world located somewhere in the Andromeda galaxy. Besides humans, other sentient races include centaurs, elves, dwarves, unicorns, hozgits (pig-like), zorgs (subhuman, orc-like), and caco-daemons. The rule book provides a psuedo-history for the planet Osgorth which helps place the battles in "historical" perspective. Magic creeps into scenarios two and three (two player version only). Scenarios four through six relate to ancient earth history, while scenario seven occurs on middle-earth, i.e., the battle at the gates of Mordor.

To get one of the scenarios up and running in the computer requires four separate disk-to-computer loads, taking about five minutes total time. I hate to imagine how long it would take to load a cassette version. The initial load is the title screen with credits, a simple press on the return key starts the second load. At the end of the second load, you are presented with a three choice menu, i.e., play a new game, play a saved game, or watch a demonstration game. In response to your choice, the computer presents a list of the seven scenarios (battles) available. They include the three that relate to the Chronicles of Osgorth (Ambush of the Unicorns, Battle of the Two Kingdoms, and Defeat of the Beasts) and four more labled "Designer Series" (Carthage vs Alexander the Great, Romans vs Vikings, Xeres vs Genghis Khan, and Gondor vs Mordor). The third load starts when you make your scenario choice and hit return. After the third load, you can review the army rosters for both the Left Side (white) Army and the Right Side (blue) Army. Then you must name the Commander-In-Chief of your army, typing in "C" activates the computer player for that army. You next set the Command Countdown Timer, choose whether you will see a detail display of morale and combat calculations, and select the skill level for solitaire play and the size/training class of the computer's army. The computer now makes its fourth and final load; the battle map is displayed after this load.

Any single scenario plays suprisingly fast, about 20 to 60 minutes. This is pretty good for a BASIC program. A real-time game system (called Rapidfire) is used that charges each unit a certain number of time-points for any action or movement it makes. A unit only gets to act/move when a predetermined number of

time-points has passed (based on its previous action/movement). Depending on its type, each unit on its turn may be able to engage in missile fire (javelins, rocks, or bow), movement, and/or melee combat. Combat is resolved on a unit vs unit level. There are several types of units available, including Heavy Infantry, Light Heavy Infantry, Medium Infantry, Light Medium Infantry, Light Infantry, Extra Heavy Cavalry, Heavy Cavalry, Light Cavalry, and missile equipped units.

I find Heavy (or EH) Cavalry good for shock attacks against foot soldiers (Infantry). Missile units are especially good when coordinated in a crossfire against a single enemy unit; they can also be used for a quick hit and run. Multiple melee attacks against a single unit help reduce the enemy army's morale and may cause that unit to rout. Careful entry of commands at the keyboard is important too, I have lost battles due to the anxious pushing of a key (nothing so frustrating as to see one of your units do the unplanned for). Hitting the enemy first and hard helps getting the morale calculations going your way.

In summary, *The Shattered Alliance* is a good computer wargame package. It has excellent documentation, good battle map graphics, fast playing scenarios, and variety. I rate it a B+. It does not have battle sound effects like *Eastern Front* (that's why I choose to have both morale and combat calculations displayed), and it requires several disk loads to get into a scenario. It appears to have adequate error trapping.

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Basic Language programmers can create boot disks for their programs by using the AUTORUN.SYS file from any MACE library disk. SAVE your program on a disk along with DOS.SYS, DUP.SYS, and AUTORUN.SYS copied from a MACE disk. Now rename your program as MENU and you will have an autoload program.

## FROM THE EDITOR

Charles Sibthorpe

With the elections behind us and all officer positions filled, it's time to get down to business! First I want to clear up the local confusion that I may be guilty of generating; my name. My legal name is Ronald Charles Sibthorpe. My mother calls me Ronald, my wife calls me Ron and some people have called me much worse (my Drill Instructor in the Marine Corps often called me four letter nouns and pronouns). But the name I prefer is Charles. Not Chuck, not Charlie but Charles. I will respond to just about anything, even the four letter nouns and pronouns of my Corps days, but I would prefer Charles.

My Editorial Staff this month was John Lesia, Bob Carlini, William Schlick and my wife Sally. I appreciate their assistance and continued loyality to me and to putting out the best Journal possible. If you meet my staff at any time, take a few minutes to say 'thank you'. I know I am greatful to have their assistance everytime I work on the Journal.

Last month's Journal contained several proposed ammendments to the constitution that we will be voting on at this month's General Meeting. A copy of the proposed amendments are available where you picked-up your Journal for this month.

The deadline for articles submited to be included in the NEXT Journal is the General Meeting PRIOR TO the next meeting. All articles submitted after the meeting will NOT appear in the next Journal. The deadline for officer's columns will be the officer's meeting PRIOR TO the next General Meeting.

One last item before I leave, support the advertisers who support MACE. Currently there are some advertisers who owe MACE for their advertisements provided in our Journal. If you are in their establishment, or are in their area, stop by and remind them that they are losing a valuable source of revenue from the readers of the Journal by not paying their bill in a timely manner.

# TARICON II

by: B.J. Franczyk

The response I am receiving to Taricon II is truly exciting. It's a real treat to see M.A.C.E. so alive and thriving. For those of you who missed the September meeting, allow me to bring you up to date. The floor voted unanimously for M.A.C.E. to host another computer convention. It will be called TARICON II. This will be done with total support of ATARI CORPORATION. We are in the process of contracting the pavilion for this event. We are looking at August 1987. We have quite a convention committee already. Currently, we are in Phase I, the process of identifying jobs, making contacts, and obtaining information. Phase II is coordinating it all. Phase III is convention weekend. As you can gather, we will need quite a group of people. Some will work thru the entire 3 phases. Others will offer part time help. The point is: "ALL HONEST EFFORT IS WELCOMED ANYTIME". We will be meeting the first Tuesday of the month at Denny's Restaurant, 24977 Northwestern Hwy., Southfield, MI at 7:30 P.M. Please mark these dates on your calendar and plan to attend.

| | |
|---|---|
| November 4, 1986 | December 2, 1986 |
| January 6, 1987 | February 3, 1987 |
| March 3, 1987 | April 7, 1987 |
| May 5, 1987 | June 2, 1987 |
| July 7, 1987 | August 4, 1987 |

If you cannot make all or any of these meetings don't fear. We will also have short meetings immediately following the M.A.C.E. meetings. This will give us good communications and, of course, good communication works for good success. So please plan to get involved. If you see a job you can handle please let me know. It is our goal to present a convention that will be a pleasant, enjoyable and profitable affair for everyone. The consumer will be exposed to the latest hi-tech hardware, new software, dynamite seminars and a host of other goodies including meeting other user groups and vendors, door prizes, workshops and getting a first hand introduction to ATARI CORPORATION. After all, we all know their computer. It should be fun to meet their people.

If you can't make the meetings, we will be running a newsletter each month in the Journal. If you have something to share please drop me a line at:

M.A.C.E.
TARICON II
P.O. Box 71
Brighton, MI 48116

If you hear or see any information in the media please let me know when, where and what you heard or saw. We will be doing some market testing to see what advertising is most effective and your feed back is what we need. Send your information to the above address on a postcard and the first correct response will get the first two free passes to TARICON II.

We are also looking for good artwork for advertising. So put your ideas on paper. There will be appreciation gifts for honest effort. So please get involved. It will be fun working together for and outstanding convention.

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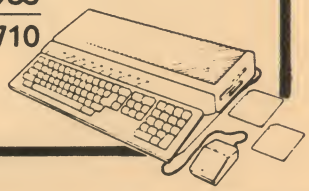

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